Utah State Office of Education Title I System of Support School Improvement

Introduction:

The mission of the Utah State Office of Education Title I School Improvement Process is to help build capacity for schools and districts to improve student achievement.

The Title IA section of No Child Left Behind requires the state educational agency to assist schools and districts in analyzing and improving student achievement. Support for the appraisal process and the training of school support teams are services of USOE that fulfill this aspect of the law.

Purpose: The USOE School Improvement Process has two components. The School Improvement Appraisal Process uses best practices and research based rubrics to highlight strengths and weaknesses in a school that will lead the school to adopt more effective practices. The training of School Support Teams ensures quality delivery of services by highly qualified practitioners using research based practices.

The goals of the appraisal and school support trainings are:

- To provide credible and knowledgeable support
- To build capacity for sustainable student achievement
- To build supportive partnerships with all stakeholders

The system will be:

- A clear and fair process that ensures compliance
- Rigorous and comprehensive
- Practical, relevant, and efficient

The appraisal system will focus on seven key components of school success:

- Curriculum
- Teaching and Learning
- Assessment
- Professional Development
- Leadership
- Parent/Community Involvement
- School Culture/Climate

Process:

Schools identified in Year 1 of School Improvement (did not make AYP for two consecutive years in a single category) will be required to participate in the School Appraisal Process. This process will be conducted by a School Support Team using the USOE appraisal rubrics or a similar comprehensive research-based appraisal system. The SST will be chosen by the school and trained by USOE. The appraisal process will be primarily funded by the school in need of improvement through Title I School Improvement grant. Schools not identified for improvement may use the USOE rubrics to conduct their own self-study. The process has three parts.

1. Preparation

Before the appraisal the school will:

- Select a School Support Team within 30 days of notification.
- Assure that all SST members have attended USOE training.
- Secure written agreements with support team members.
- Determine the reimbursement procedures for the SST.
- Set a date so that the appraisal will be completed within 60 days of notification of school improvement status.
- Review the current School Improvement Plan and data to identify potential weaknesses for consideration during the appraisal.
- Review the construct list.
- Identify and gather supporting evidence as requested by the SST.
- Set a schedule for the SST to conduct the appraisal.
- Prepare necessary documentation including: copies of the School Improvement Plan, copies of the previous appraisal(if any), teacher schedules, a school map, and copies of evidence to accurately appraise the school.
- Recruit parents and select a cross section of students for focus groups.

2. The appraisal

During the appraisal the School Support Team will

- Conduct administration and teacher interviews.
- Perform classroom observations.
- Conduct parent and student focus groups.
- Request supporting documentation.
- Prepare a report to share with the administration and staff.
- Use data to understand trends and challenges

3. Follow-up

After the appraisal the school staff should

- Re-evaluate and revise the school plan.
- Present the revised plan to the local school board and submit the plan to USOE.
- Implement the revised school plan with the ongoing assistance of the School Support Team.
- Continue to monitor progress through data analysis and reference to the appraisal rubrics.

Schools identified for Corrective Action will be subject to a re-appraisal led by at least one member of the Utah State Office of Education School Improvement Team, using the USOE appraisal rubrics. The SST *must* be chosen from the approved USOE pool. This process will be funded by the school in need of improvement through Title I School Improvement grant. Details of this process will follow in another document.